

## **Temporary Smart Growth Area Determination Guidance**

This guide is being made available to assist in determining whether a property is in a designated growth area or not. To date there is no single searchable computer-based tool that can easily determine a property's Planning Area on the State Development and Redevelopment Plan map and therefore whether it is in an area designated for growth. It is the State's goal that eventually the "Smart Growth Locator" (SGL) will provide this function. But the SGL is not currently capable of providing that service. Until that tool is improved, this guide is designed to help users locate properties.

The basic process of finding out whether a property is allocated in a designated growth area is the same as trying to find anything on a map, just select the type of map to use and locate the general area of the property site on the map.

### **Type of Map**

Some organizations will have the ability to integrate the State's GIS data into its own mapping or GIS programs and the expertise to use this data to assess the location of a property on the State Plan map. An in-house system such as this should allow a regulated entity to efficiently determine the location and relevant Planning Area of any extensions. This document is designed to assist those organizations without this capability.

To make an assessment of whether a subject property is in a designated growth area using the publicly available tools, we recommend a two step process. First, use the Smart Growth Locator available from the HMFA web site <http://sgl.state.nj.us/hmfa/viewer.htm> to locate the subject property. Second, check the State Plan Quad PDF files available from <http://nj.gov/dca/osg/resources/maps/quadmaps.shtml> to determine whether it is in a designated growth area or not.

**NOTE: THE SMART GROWTH LOCATOR DOES NOT USE THE STANDARD DEFINITION OF "SMART GROWTH AREA" AS DEFINED BY THE BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES, THE OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH, AND MANY OTHER STATE AGENCIES.** We recommend its use as a reference tool ONLY, and not for making final determinations as to whether a property is in a designated growth area or not. When the SGL is accurate and the State is confident in its abilities, the Board will provide notice that it may be used to make final determinations.

### **Locating the Property**

#### **Step 1**

In most cases, the lookup will be fairly straightforward. Run the Smart Growth Locator, type in the address into the address fields, and push the 'Locate' button. In most cases, an address will be found in the database which matches the one being search for, or the SGL will be present the most probable matches of which one is often the correct property.

Occasionally, address will not come up in the SGL. These circumstances usually involve non-standard addresses, zip code discrepancies, and place name issues.

Zip code discrepancies can be trouble shot with the United States Postal Services web site, [http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/citytown\\_zip.htm](http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/citytown_zip.htm). Place name issues can be resolved using the Localities tool on NJ's web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/infobank/locality.htm>.

Additional maps may be helpful, for example any of the most popular online mapping tools: <http://maps.google.com>, <http://mappoint.msn.com/>, <http://www.mapquest.com>, and <http://maps.yahoo.com/>.

If there are difficulties verifying the existence of a street, using <http://www.google.com> can help. For example, if a search such as ‘ “Pleasant Valley Road” Marlboro, Monmouth County’ in Google gets five (5) hits but ‘ “Pleasant Valley Drive” Marlboro, Monmouth County ’ gets 300 hits, that suggests that it is likely that the second address variation is the correct address to assess. In addition, in the results of some of the above searches, one can often find directions to the street in question, directions which include nearby streets and even maps.

If a street does not yet exist, locate nearby cross roads to help guide you to the actual location of the property.

The SGL allows the user view the 2002 New Jersey state aerial photographs to further narrow down the location of the subject property.

Once the SGL puts a star on its map identifying the subject property, then refer to the quad maps prepared by the Office of Smart Growth referenced above.

## **Step 2**

Open the quad map covering the subject property. By zooming and panning on the quad map, the user will be able to identify the location of the subject property. Refer back to the SGL if necessary to help identify the property on the quad map. The quad maps are the maps from which regulated entities should determine whether it is in a designated growth area or not.

## **Is the property in an area designated for growth?**

For the purposes of the Board of Public Utilities Smart Growth Main Extension rules, a “designated growth area” (N.J.A.C. 14:3-8.2) is an area on the New Jersey State Planning Commission State Plan Policy Map that is classified as on of the following:

1. Planning Area 1 (Metropolitan Planning Area, or PA-1);
2. Planning Area 2 (Suburban Planning Area, or PA-2);
3. A designated center;
4. An area identified for growth as a result of either an initial or advanced petition for plan endorsement that has been approved by the State Planning Commission pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:85-7;
5. A smart growth area and planning area designated in a master plan adopted by the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission pursuant to subsection (I) of section 6 of N.J.S.A. 13:17-6; or

6. A Pinelands Regional Growth Area, Pinelands Village or Pinelands Town, as designated in the Comprehensive Management Plan prepared and adopted by the Pinelands Commission pursuant to section 7 of the Pinelands Protection Act, N.J.S.A. 13:18A-8.

A determination should be straightforward enough if the entire property is inside or outside that which is considered a “designated growth area”. A list of designated centers can be found at: <http://www.state.nj.us/dca/osg/plan/centerslist.shtml>.

If location or Smart Growth Assessment of the subject property still cannot be made, contact a regional planner at the Office of Smart Growth (OSG). For OSG contact information see: <http://www.state.nj.us/dca/osg/team/contact.shtml>.

If a property is located in the Pinelands or the Meadowlands it will likely be necessary to contact the appropriate administrative agency to get a determination on whether a subject property is located in a designated growth area. For the Meadowlands check: <http://www.meadowlands.state.nj.us/commission/Links.cfm>. And for the Pinelands check: <http://www.state.nj.us/pinelands>.

For record keeping purposes, a regulated entity may want to print out a screen-shot of the SGL and the corresponding State Plan quad map to document whether the property is in a designated growth area or not.

### **Smart Growth Area Manual Lookup: An Example**

Below is the process taken to search for an address received which could not be found by the Smart Growth Locator (SGL); 32 Circle Rd, Florham Park 07932.

The process for locating that address is illustrative in how difficult this process can be.

After finding that the address didn't work in the SGL, <http://sgl.state.nj.us/hmfa/viewer.htm>, just the address and zip and just the address and municipality were entered into the locator, to see if either alone worked. One does this because sometimes the municipality and zip-code combination is faulty.

After that did not work, another very different address number was tried, 1 Circle Road, with just the zip-code and just the municipality name because sometimes the address one is looking for is missing from the database, but the road and its other addresses still exist.

When that failed, the USPS web site was visited at [http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/citytown\\_zip.jsp](http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/citytown_zip.jsp), to see if there was a zip code problem. Physical addresses often vary from postal addresses, so it helps to check. Florham Park's zip came up clean, so that wasn't it.

Next, the locality name (place name) lookup tool was visited on the State's web site. Sometimes, municipality (locality) names in addresses are not official addresses or are secondary names for another locality. The best way to do a broad search is to only type your locality of interest in to the "local name" box and not fill anything else out. Narrow it down only if the returned list is too broad.

The site; <http://www.nj.gov/infobank/locality.htm>, also returned a clean find on the name Florham; Florham Park Borough, Morris County.

Seeing that nothing was working yet, Google was visited to see if the road existed in Morris County, and who else might have an address on the same road. The name was typed in - "Circle Road" Florham Park - in to the search box and indeed, there were other businesses on the street, including a Paul Carpenter Associates at 48 Circle Road, Florham Park.

Real address on the street of interest in hand, SuperPages was visited, <http://www.superpages.com>, Verizon's great online phone book. The Paul Carpenter Associates business name is typed in to the business name field and the returned result gave me a phone book entry for the business. One of the links for the business is a map. Click on the map and Viola!, instant map of Circle Road and cross streets.

Returning to the SGL, a dummy address for the nearest street is typed in, which in this case is Briarwood Avenue, and bingo, you have a results map. The general vicinity, according to the SGL, is a Smart Growth Area.

To insure that this determination is correct, verifying the determination with State Planning maps is necessary. The municipality Quads list; <http://nj.gov/dca/osg/resources/maps/municipalitiesquadlist.shtml>, tells us that Florham Park is on Quads 39 and 40. Clicking on Quad 39 on the Quad map page; <http://nj.gov/dca/osg/resources/maps/quadmaps.shtml>, indeed confirms that that portion of Florham Park is a Planning Area One (1), Metropolitan Planning Area, and is indeed a Smart Growth Area.

An ironic twist to this is that you can see Circle Road on the SGL map when you look up Briarwood Avenue, but for some reason, the SGL database just contain it in searchable form in its database.

Keep in mind, address troubleshooting is not a rigid process and you should vary how you go about your lookups based on what the results of your searching is telling you. Do not follow this process the same way every time; sometimes the tools are needed in a different order, sometimes other tools entirely may be necessary.

In order to make the process go as smoothly as possible, make sure to get post office name, town and nearest cross street and any other pertinent local information in order to prevent annoying searches like the one above.

Final caveat. The Smart Growth Definitions in the existing Smart Growth Locator are not the same as the standard definition of Smart Growth area as determined by the board of public utilities, the office of smart growth, and many other state agencies. Until the Smart Growth Locator is updated, that final check on the Office of Smart Growth Quads is necessary to verify your Smart Growth Assessment.